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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses Esperanto as a planned language and refutes three myths connected to it, namely, that Esperanto is achronical, atopical, and apragmatic. The focus here is on a synchronic analysis. Synchronic variability is studied with reference to the structuralist determination of "marginality" and the dynamic linguistic description of "linguistic variables." Marginality is studied on the morphophonemic and on the lexical level. Linguistic variability is studied through a sociolinguistic survey. The sociolinguistic evidence is seen to converge with the structuralist evidence, and the synchronic analysis with earlier diachronic studies. It is hoped that this analysis will contribute to a redirection of scholarly work on Esperanto. (AM)

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MARGINALITY AND VARIABILITY IN ESPERANTO

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by

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MARGINALITY AND VARIABILITY IN ESPERANTO

1. Introduction. A peculiar subclass of the languages used by man are artificial languages. Genetically, they are characterized by their punctual origin; that is, we usually know a definite point in time when they arose, and know, in fact, which single author or, sometimes, group of authors created them. In contrast with natural languages, which are typically associated with a particular culture, social group, or political entity, artificial languages have no such associations. Still, both types of languages are the outcome of human convention--artificial languages more consciously so. For this reason, and to avoid erroneous implications of naturalness for the so-called natural languages, we will henceforth call these ethnic languages instead. Because of their diffuse origin and variegated history, subjected to all sorts of external influences and internal pressures, ethnic languages are at the same richer and less powerful than artificial languages. The lack of ambiguity and redundancy built into artificial languages makes these more powerful than ethnic languages; but the latter are richer precisely because they admit of multiple meaning, imprecision, and round-about ways of expression.

For the purposes of this paper, let us underline, then, three crucial characteristics of artificial languages: their being

(1) achronic (i.e. they do not change through time),

(2) atopic (i.e. they are neutral as to place or class of individual using them), and

(3) apragmatic (i.e. their logic and lack of ambiguity and redun-

dancy makes them unsuited for expressing attitudes, emotions, and playful linguistic nuances).

There are at least two kinds of artificial languages: (1) those intended for machine use (artificial languages proper) or other limited purposes (auxiliary languages, such as Interlingua and the International Language for Aviation), and (2) those intended to be used as international or universal languages, assuming most or all of the functions of ethnic languages. The second kind of artificial languages we will distinguish as planned languages. Esperanto is, with its punctual origin, an artificial language of the second kind, a planned language, intended for full international or universal use.

However, by now, Esperanto has become an international language indistinguishable in many of its characteristics from any ethnic language. This is particularly true in respect to the way it functions for its users, and in respect to its internal development. Such naturalness had of course been the intention of its designer, Zamenhof, who chose its structure and forms (especially the lexicon) in imitation of ethnic languages--so much so that, in the absence of external historical evidence to the contrary, Esperanto could easily pass as a Romance language. This first-hand impression is indeed substantiated in Brent 1964, and in minimum recognition of this, Esperanto has been classed as a planned language of the a posteriori type (i.e. one patently based on, and borrowing from, a compact group of ethnic languages).

Various myths about Esperanto's lingering artificiality have, however, been sustained that dissolve only under close scientific scrutiny. There is, first of all, the myth of Esperanto achronicality, that is, the belief

that it alone among languages does not change through time (Courtenay 1908: 41).[1] How can one overlook that even the initiator of Esperanto himself has allowed for synchronic-diachronic variability in his language, admitting, beside a relatively immutable canon (the Foundation), linguistic innovation observable in "good writers", including himself (Zamenhof 1905: ix-x [1963: 47-8])? Even the assumption--a weak version of the achronicality myth, and seemingly not contradicting Zamenhof's view--that Esperanto archaisms, i.e. the forms pushed out by innovations, will never entirely lose their currency, and will still be intelligible to the ordinary Esperanto speaker in centuries to come, is patent nonsense.

To gain an immediate impression of the extent to which Esperanto has changed already, a careful reading of Grabowski's translation of Pushkin's "Snow Storm" (Puŝkin' 1888 [1967]) would serve. Evidently, a detailed linguistic commentary of this and other early Esperanto texts of authors or translators who were in reasonable command of the language and did not show pronounced reformist tendencies, would be helpful for the modern reader. At any rate, the achronicality myth is easily dispelled by a mass of lexical, phonological, and grammatical data showing Esperanto's development and growth since its inception in 1887 (Brent 1967).

There is, further, the myth of Esperanto atopicality, that is, the belief that it alone among languages does not exhibit variability through space and from speaker to speaker or even within individual speakers. This myth is harder to lay to rest, not only because of the sensitivity of the subject for Esperanto apologists, and the lack of studies on this topic, but also since even students of ethnic languages, such as English and French, have only recently begun to make an effort to account for internal linguistic variability, often conditioned by such external factors as the

speaker's social class and the speech situation (Brent 1973). It is clear at once that the mere fact every Esperanto speaker is unavoidably bilingual must have an effect on how the language is used.

Since the more easily documented case for Esperanto diachronic variability has been made separately (in Brent 1967 mentioned above), the present study proposes a look especially at synchronic variability in Esperanto. In this connection, it should be noted that the strict Saussurian dichotomy of synchronic and diachronic description is misleading and outmoded in the light of recent advances in panchronic variable linguistic analysis (Bailey 1971).

A third myth--that Esperanto is logical but unexpressive--need not be dealt with here. Cf. on this point Zamenhof 1962: 25, 92, 119; Auld 1964; Gregor 1967; Hagler 1970.

In the following, two different analytic procedures will be brought to bear on the question of Esperanto synchronic variability: the structuralist determination of marginality (Mathesius 1934), and the dynamic linguistic description of linguistic variables (Labov 1970, 1972; Brent 1973). The space available here does not allow me to discuss in detail the results of the complementary diachronic studies (Brent 1964, 1967), but I will give at least some evidence showing that the synchronic analyses here presented converge with the earlier diachronic work.

2. Marginality. The marginal system of Esperanto is the subset of the total language system that contains phonological, morphophonemic, and morphological elements and patterns which are marked, irregular, and somehow peculiar, and hence are not part of the core system. (For determining syntactic marginality and semantically defined lexical marginality, syn-

chronic structuralist analysis seems insufficient, and we must rely on diachronic evidence.) Thus, certain phonemes and phoneme combinations are found only in "foreign words", that is, relatively little assimilated lexical items borrowed from other languages. As to phoneme inventory, Esperanto ĥ, eŭ, and oŭ may well be characteristic of such little assimilated lexemes, technical terms, or proper names: donkiĥoto, ĥirurgo, iĥtofagio, maĥo, Miĥaelo, Raĥel, Zeĥarja; neŭtrala, feŭdo, eŭtanazio, leŭkocito, Eŭropo; poŭpo, toŭfuo, Ĉoŭ. The fact that most lexemes containing ĥ have alternants with k (occasionally ĉ) corroborates the suspected marginality of ĥ: arĥitekto~arkitekto, ĥemio~kemio, ĥoro~koruso, ĥinujo~Ĉinio, ĥilo~Ĉilo.[2] The phoneme dz[3] seems marginal: adzo, edzo, haladzo; apart from edzo, these words are rare, and the marginality of edz- may turn on its expressiveness (see below). Prevocalic ŭ within morpheme boundaries is rare and a sure sign of marginality, the more so since word-initial ŭ- often competes with word-initial v-: ŭato~vato.

As to phoneme distribution, the rarity of certain morpheme-internal clusters (as contrasted with such clusters across morpheme boundaries) is indicative of marginality. Thus, many of the stem-initial consonant clusters presented in Kawasaki 1961 are obviously marginal, apart from their rarity, because of their restriction to technical terms and proper names: dnj-, ŝk-, tl-, pn-, tm-, km-, dv-, vl-, vr-, ft-, gn-, mn-, sf-, pt-, bd-, ks-, kŝ-, ps-, pf-. Other rare initial clusters given by Kawasaki seem to involve orthographic rather than phonological peculiarities: mj-, nj-, fj-, vj-, ts-; this point will be discussed separately below. Stem-final clusters with h also seem marginal: mirh-, budh-. In this connection, note that, more generally, h in any other but initial position is marginal: kahel-.

Morpheme-internal vowel hiatus may also be symptomatic of marginality: hiat-, viand-, fier-, mien-, violon-, liut-, trotuar-, muel-, kuir-, soif-, foir-, koit-, goelet-, Groenland-, maiz-, maat-.[4] However, several of these strike me as less marginal than the mentioned rare consonant clusters. It is doubtful cases like these that suggest repeating the analysis for an older stage of the language, e.g. that of the First Book (Zamenhof 1887), and complementing it with diachronic findings about Esperanto's internal history and putative sources.

Spelling peculiarities may give away foreign elements as marginal: ekzemplo, budĝeto, ghetto, tsetseo, Lhaso~Lasso, mirho. The irregular spelling kz, for what is generally pronounced [gz],[5] could be assumed to be synchronically motivated as a way of distinguishing the live prefixes eks- and ek- from otherwise identical *eks elements which are integral parts of Esperanto stems: ekzil-o (for *eksil-o) ~ eks-il-o, ekzalt-i~ek-salt-i, ekzekv-i~ek-sekv-i. However, this synchronic explanation is singularly weak, and we cannot but immediately refer to two etymological, i.e. diachronic, reasons for this irregularity: (1) the fact that three of Esperanto's source languages, French, English, and Russian, have the pronunciation [gz] in the corresponding lexemes; (2) perhaps most cogently, the fact that Russian has the spelling kz for [gz] in the corresponding lexemes. (Ekzemo, exceptionally, has kz or equivalent in other source languages beside Russian.)

Tsetseo can be explained as unsystematic interference from English or French spelling; so can Lhaso[6] unless this form is actually to represent difficult to pronounce [lhá.so], in which case it joins the marginal consonant clusters discussed above. However, the spelling Lhaso, pronounced [lá.so] or [lhá.so], could also be motivated by overzealous homonymy

avoidance--but who would really anticipate confusing Laso 'Lhasa' with the verbal noun laso 'a letting'?--and perhaps a desire to preserve a graphic image closer to the source language. This latter explanation of the irregular spelling Lh- seems to fit also the morpheme-internal double consonant spellings, at least for those Esperanto speakers who do not pronounce double consonants within single morphemes. (Are there any who do?) Note that budĝeto, which might as well be written *buĝĝeto, is also a case of orthographic consonant doubling.

Theoretically, the two sequences (a) VK and (b) VKK, as in budo∿buddo, could be distinguished phonologically in either of two ways:

(1) $\bar{V}K \sim \breve{V}K$ or

(2) $V\breve{K} \sim V\bar{K}$

that is, the length distinction (whatever its phonetic nature) can be manifest consistently either in the vowels or the consonants. In fact, phonetically, (3) $\bar{V}\breve{K} \sim \breve{V}\bar{K}$ is also a likely possibility. However, I have not yet observed any consistent phonetic distinction of $VK \sim V\bar{K}$ with speakers of Esperanto--the injunction of Kalocsay and Waringhien 1958: 41 notwithstanding. Thus, double consonants within the same morpheme are a clear indication of orthographic marginality. Cf. now also Waringhien 1970: xvi.

The distinction of the type mielo 'honey' ∿ mjelo 'spinal cord' seems to be more graphic than real. Of course, these two words could be distinguished in pronunciation. The question is, however, whether Esperanto speakers normally make an oral contrast in such cases. Without a special investigation based on observation of actual speech, we cannot answer that question. Still, one would suspect that any distinction between -ié- and -jé- (and also in general $i\acute{V} \sim j\acute{V}$) is a mark of extra careful style. The same is true with $u\acute{V} \sim \text{ŭ}\acute{V}$--a phonologically insignificant contrast (for

example, trotuaro--pronounced with u or ŭ). As to morpheme-initial prevocalic position, it is true for both glides, j and ŭ, that there is no contrast with unstressed high vowel: unstressed initial i does not occur in this environment, or is written j, and unstressed initial u--if we disregard here the graphic neologisms of Waringhien 1970: 1152--does not occur there either, or is written ŭ (when not replaced by v). As we have seen above (p. 5), independent ŭ, i.e. ŭ not part of the core diphthong aŭ and the marginal diphthongs eŭ and oŭ, is rare, and frequently alternates with v; by contrast, j is quite omnipotent, occurring freely both before and after vowels in the same morpheme.

Already on purely synchronic grounds, we can pose, then, that i∿j and u∿ŭ are graphic variants of the same phonemes j and ŭ (which may serve but as indirect markers of word stress where needed: baldaŭ instead of *báldau, hurioj instead of *huríoi). i∿j and u∿ŭ occurring before stressed syllable could be represented, at least in colloquial style, by either graphic variant: buduaro∿*budŭaro, viando∿*vjando. Note, however, that when the vowels and glides are potentially stressed themselves, the graphic neutralization does not hold: ja≠ia, analogously ŭo≠*uo; this applies only to monosyllabic stems. Elsewhere, if we find graphic j and ŭ for regular i and u, the forms are marginal: thus, entjero, Vjetnamio, Gŭido are marginal beside regular tantiemo, fiero, gvido, ruino. (Occasionally, marginality shows up as retained etymological morpheme boundary; e.g. in objekt-, we find j, appropriate for morpheme-initial position, from Latin ob-iect--- reinforced, of course, by graphic j in this stem in other source languages.)

The present analysis, assuming a partial overlap of i∿j and u∿ŭ,[7] is reinforced by historical evidence. Esperanto i and j regularly correspond to a single Latin phoneme i; similarly, Esperanto u, ŭ, and v correspond

predictably to single Latin u (Brent 1964). Furthermore, in the Esperanto of the First Book (Zamenhof 1887), u and v are in complementary distribution, ŭ occurring only in the diphthong aŭ. At the same stage in Esperanto's development, i and j contrast only word-initially--thus obviating the direct notation of stress; elsewhere, only i is found except that postconsonantally (1) j is written in the single international stem objekt- already mentioned; (2) it occurs also as part of the phoneme (?) nj (Kalocsay and Waringhien 1958: 48-9), as in sinjor-, and (3) in the expressive, marginal suffixes -ĉj and -nj. Also, i-diphthongs are written with j: aj, uj.

Albault's recent account of the same problem (1973), ignores most of the synchronic and diachronic findings here presented, and is further vitiated by assuming, without empirical evidence, that Esperanto i~j and u~ŭ are usually phonetically distinct. This remains to be determined. In the meantime, it may be useful to hypothesize that Esperanto has two underlying high vowels, i and u, which are variably realized as vowels, glides, and, in some cases, even consonants. For the purposes of the present discussion, at any rate, let us retain that certain occurrences of graphic j and ŭ are marginal: mjelo, Vjetnamio, galjono, kŭaks, Gŭido, ŭato, leŭso, toŭfuo.

Morpheme length may be a further criterion of marginality: marginal lexemes tend to be longer than lexemes belonging to the core system. Thus, in the two separate vocabulary sheets of the First Book (Zamenhof 1887), most of the 900 odd morphemes (Zamenhof 1887: 11, Waringhien 1954: 6) are monosyllabic or disyllabic. Not counting -aŭ as part of the stem (cf. Albault 1973: 56), we obtain the following complete list of trisyllabic morphemes. Note that the seven words with the stem neni- (nenia, nenian > Mod. Esp. neniam, nenie, neniel, nenies, nenio, neniu) do not belong here since they are dimorphemic.

akompan-	diligent-	magazen-	pantalon-
alumet-	efektiv-	Mihael-[8]	rekompenc-
aparten-	famili-	oportun-	†societ-
cigared-	†lecion-	ordinar-	†violon-

That is only 16 trisyllabic morphemes in all, or less than 2% of the total vocabulary listed. If we set aside Mihael- (see fn. 8), and count the three stems marked with † as variably disyllabic, in accordance with the preceding discussion of i^j, we can conclude that only a dozen morphemes out of more than 900 in the vocabulary list of the First Book are trisyllabic. Adding to this the fact that no morpheme there listed is longer than three syllables, we may hence safely assume that morphemes of three or more syllables are marginal in Esperanto.

Applying this criterion at once to other Esperanto morphemes cited directly or indirectly (that is, in their Russian guise [see Zamenhof 1887: 10]) in the text of the First Book, we find such international stems as redakci-, telegraf-, temperatur-, botanik-, komedi-, ekspluat-, advokat- (ibid.) and the proper name Varsovi- (Zamenhof 1887: 59). Notice in passing how the marginality of these international forms is further brought out through unusual consonant clusters and hiatuses: kc (redakci-), kspl (ekspluat-), dv (advokat-), ua (ekspluat-), ea (teatr- [ibid.: 10]).

Marginality is further indicated by certain vowel or consonant alternations between related words, and, generally, by frozen morphological derivation patterns, one or more members of the alternation set being marginal: transitive pesi ~ intransitive pezi, generalo~ĝenerala, noun konversaci-o ~ verb konvers-i, noun deklaraci-o ~ verb deklar-i, noun revelaci-o ~ verb rivel-i (cf. Akademio de Esperanto 1968: 73); gener-aci-o ~gener-ator-o~gener-i; redak-ci-o~redakt-or-o~redakt-i; arhitekt-ur-o~

arĥitekt-o; admiral-itat-o∿admiral-o; naci-onal-ism-o∿naci-o; evolu-ci-o∿evolu-i. Many of the quasi-affixes (Ten Seldam 1955) involved in these patterns, which are usually not productive in Esperanto,[9] are indicative of marginal stems or words: -aci-o (∿-uci-o) ∿-ϕ-i, -ci-o∿-t-or-o∿-t-i, -ci-on-al-ism-o∿-ci-o, -ur-o∿-ϕ-o, -itat-o∿-ϕ-o, re-∿ri-. Ten Seldam 1955 gives a full listing and some discussion of quasi-affixes and quasi-roots that are largely symptomatic of marginal lexical items in Esperanto.

It is interesting to note that--leaving aside prefixally used prepositions (inter-, preter-)--affixes are no longer than one syllable, both in the Esperanto of the First Book and in Modern Esperanto. Many quasi-affixes, on the other hand, are disyllabic (amfi-, para-, peri-, -krati, -ibil, -ifik, -oid [note the hiatus], -aci∿-uci, -itat) or even longer (-onalism)--a further sign of marginality.

The marginal status of lexemes may be evidenced also by the coexistence of competing forms with the same meaning: jogurto∿jahurto (the second being more marginal than the first because of internal h), plaĝo∿strando, ĥoro∿koruso, redaktoro∿redaktisto, evolucio∿evoluo. At least one of the forms in each of these sets is marginal, if not both.

Technical terms are likely to show marginal traits that have been discussed: tmezo, bdelio (unusual consonant clusters), toŭfuo, poŭpo (oŭ), mjelo (CjV), iĥtiofagio (ĥ), ŭato (initial ŭ), otorinolaringologio (stem length), generatoro (characteristic quasi-affix). But there is another group of marginal forms exhibiting unusual phonological traits: onomatopoeias and expressive or emotionally marked words, many of which belong to the form class of interjections: ts, tpr, sss, ŝŝ, ŭa; midzi, murmuri, zigzagi, tiktaki. Apart from unusual consonant clusters, the single phoneme dz, and initial ŭ--manifest, in principle, also with technical terms--

we find here reduplication (murmuri) and reduplication combined with gradation (zigzagi, tiktaki)--two processes not attested in the core system of Esperanto. We notice also that the canonical forms of interjections and onomatopoeias are quite unique, admitting consonant clusters (including long spirants) not found elsewhere in the language. Even if already recorded in the First Book, -ĉj and -nj are marginal not only because of their expressiveness as hypocoristic suffixes, but also because of their postconsonantal j, as noted above, and, furthermore, their peculiar variable truncation effect on preceding stems: Aleksandro~Aleĉjo, Miĥaelo~Miĉjo, Margareta ~Marganjo~Manjo, onklo~oĉjo~onklino~onjo.

Already in terms of language structure alone, these different examples of marginality provide a first demonstration of the reality of Esperanto's synchronic variability and panchronic dynamism. There are at least two coexisting systems in the language: a central one, with the most usual and regular patterns and forms, and a marginal one, a storehouse of innovations and archaisms and oddities that would quite change the basic description of the language if not recognized as marginal. The structuralist account gives, in fact, a distorted view of linguistic reality since it says little about the incidence of the different elements in actual use. If--to give one illustration of this--one can carry on a perfectly ordinary conversation in Esperanto, ranging over a variety of topics, say, for ten minutes, without even once using ĥ, eŭ, bd-, or kŝ-, or even -aci or -ur, then surely these items have a different status in the language than such ordinary phonemes as t and i, and such trivial suffixes as -o and -ig. It is precisely the Prague School notion of marginality (Mathesius 1934) that introduces more realism and practical usefulness into structuralist linguistic descriptions.

Again, from the point of view of language use, the coexistence of the two systems means that the speaker has, in many cases, a choice between competing alternants: marginal (archaic, technical, "foreign", innovating) ĥ, ŭ-, ts-, vj-, eŭ, oŭ, -ifikacio, -onalismo, -atoro, -itato and central (stable, everyday, "native") k, v-, c-, vi-, ej, o or aŭ, -ado, -ismo, -ilo, -ejo. Conversely, we can use the presence of marginal forms in a given text as an indication of a particular style or variety of Esperanto. This, however, leads us to the suspicion that the dichotomous distinction of core and marginal system is not supple enough to account for the full range of variability found in Esperanto. In the next section, we will not only take a gradient approach to the description of synchronic variability in Esperanto, but also show, to some extent, the influence of extralinguistic factors on the choice of alternants.

3. Variability. Whereas in the preceding pages we have dealt with Esperanto as a formal structure, albeit disystemic, now, in a more empirical vein, we will examine some of the results of a sociolinguistic survey of 18 Esperanto speakers chosen among the 200 odd in attendance at the 46th annual convention of Sennacieca Asocio Tutmonda in Toronto, Canada, in July-August 1973. Most of the participants of the convention came from Europe and North America, with a majority of Frenchmen and Americans. This is reflected in the sample population: 8 reported English as their native language, 5 were native speakers of French, 2 of German, and one each of Flemish, Polish, and Japanese. Significantly, 11 subjects were now living in a country with English as official language, and at least 6 were now working in a French language environment. One of the French speakers was also a native speaker of Esperanto.

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In conducting the survey, I searched for volunteers representing a maximum diversity of linguistic and demographic backgrounds, but hoped, at the same time, to find meaningful clusters of at least four or five subjects for some descriptive cells. Thus, as to native language, English and French speakers are well enough represented to allow some generalizations, if desirable, about their collective linguistic behavior in Esperanto. The representatives of the remaining languages could serve only as case studies.

By demographic descriptors, the sample breaks down as follows. Age: half (9) of the subjects were between the ages of 18 and 45, the other half were 46-81 years old. Sex: 13 were male, 5 female. Socioeconomic status (composite estimate based on the subjects' reported education and occupation): high 13, low 5.

Each of the 18 subjects was given a separate three-part interview, consisting of a lengthy (about 10 minutes) oral questionnaire, a short reading passage, and unstructured narration of an event in the subject's life. The interview was designed to elicit two-three different degrees of situational and, hopefully, linguistic formality in each case. Minimum linguistic competence in Esperanto was defined as the subject's ability to answer my questions in the first part of the interview. (In fact, I suspect that anybody able to read my call for volunteers at the convention, was competent to be interviewed.) As to exposure to Esperanto--defined as the product of years since first learning and weekly contact hours--the subjects neatly divide into three groups of 6. When counting weekly contact hours alone, again three groups of 6 are obtained, but with somewhat different membership. The other exposure factor, years since first learning, yields two even groups of 9. In each case, one group represents

high exposure, one low exposure, and, where there are three groups, one represents intermediate exposure to Esperanto. The data for these groupings, as all the other data on language knowledge and language use, and the demographic data were obtained through the questionnaire in the first part of the interviews. The point of the grouping by degree of exposure to Esperanto was to find some explanation for differential competence in that language; for, independently from the assessment of the subjects' behavior with the two linguistic variables studied in detail (see below) and without reference to the exposure groupings, I ranked the subjects by overall, impressionistic competence in Esperanto from high (8 subjects) to low (7), with 3 hard-to-decide intermediate cases. However, no clear picture emerges when we compare overall competence with overall exposure: high competence seems to be somewhat favored by intermediate exposure, low competence going not only, not surprisingly, with low exposure, but also, puzzlingly, with high exposure. One explanation for this may be that the age extremes correlate with low linguistic competence in Esperanto, and that exposure ranking is largely age ranking in disguise.

We will return to the question of competence briefly again below. At this point, I would like to emphasize that the purpose of the survey was not primarily an evaluation of the linguistic competence of groups or individuals, but rather a description of the variability of Esperanto in actual use by different speakers and in different settings. Linguists have traditionally eschewed all but native speakers for their data gathering--a principle certainly not very fruitful in the case of Esperanto, if indeed so with other languages in a bilingual setting. However, the assumption that high variability correlates with low competence was borne out by the results of this survey; all this may mean is that we rate competence by

variability, especially variability involving manifestations of underlying invariants that deviate from "correct", standard manifestations. There must be a point where such deviation becomes so marked, and competence so low that a speaker exhibiting it would no longer count as a speaker of Esperanto. I do not know of any better criterion for fixing such a cut-off point of competence than intelligibility. This means, as long as a speaker still manages to communicate with other speakers of Esperanto, without adverse side effects and with a degree of competence that is not markedly different from most other Esperantists' in a similar setting, we have to count him as a valid informant of Esperanto speech even if he deviates notably from correct usage. According to this criterion of communicative competence, all subjects of the present survey count as Esperanto speakers.

The interviews yielded 18 tape-recorded speech samples, each about 30 minutes in length, representing semiformal style (the questionnaire part), formal style (the subjects' reading of a dialog prepared by me to include a variety of contrastive phonological elements), and informal style (the recounting by the subjects of upsetting events--designed to lead to the dropping of their linguistic guards, i.e. their linguistic formality). Apart from biographic information, the questionnaire notably included a whole array of questions about the subjects' languages and their different functions, especially, of course, questions about their uses of Esperanto. At the present stage of the analysis of the survey data, it turns out, against expectation, that the style, i.e. degree of linguistic formality as measured by variability and choice of high vs. low alternants, of part I (the questionnaire) differs minimally or not at all from the style of part III (the narration); in fact, in some cases, the narrative style is slightly more formal than the style of the question and answer period. On

the other hand, the style of part II (the prepared reading passage) is markedly different--more than expected--from non-reading style. This is so in spite of the fact that the passage represented a lively dialog in an informal setting, a mild argument between a married couple, and the subjects were asked to read the text at first silently for comprehension. In some cases, the difference may be tied to the fact that the subjects hardly ever read Esperanto though they were fluent speakers.

To illustrate Esperanto variability across styles (i.e. within individuals) and across speakers in a concrete way, I have chosen two linguistic variables: the phoneme (ĥ) and the accusative suffix (-n). Many other variables are worth investigating, but have to be left for future reports. The marginality and variability of (ĥ) has already been indicated above (pp. 5, 12-3 and fn. 8) both on synchronic and diachronic grounds. Our second variable, (-n) was the object of study of Manders 1947.

The four manifestations of (ĥ) found in the survey data were indexed as follows (from least marked to most marked): 0 [k], 1 [x], 2 [ç], 3 [h]. As is explicable by its marginal status, (ĥ), especially its [x] manifestation, occurred very rarely apart from the two times it appeared in the reading passage prepared by me. Even in the reading, however, [x] was avoided, aĥ being frequently rendered as ha.

The choice of [x] and [ç] is linguistically conditioned: [ç] occurs before high front vowel (hierarĥio), [x] elsewhere for the one speaker who used either manifestation of (ĥ). Demographic factors did not seem to influence the realization of (ĥ) except that subjects over 45 years of age seemingly preferred the marked manifestations of (ĥ)--9 subjects with an average (ĥ) variability index of 1.47--compared to the younger subjects' preference of the less marked manifestations--9 subjects with an average

(ĥ) variability index of 1.27. Native language seems to be influential as indicated in the following table:

Native Language	Number of Subjects	(ĥ) Variability	
Japanese	1	.50	
German	2	.75	Germanic 1.11
English	8	1.15	
Flemish	1	1.50	
French	5	1.94	
Polish	1	2.00	
	Total 18	Average 1.36	

Since [ç] is rare--it was observed only with one subject--the indices above 1.00 indicate the importance of the [h] manifestation of (ĥ). The great frequency of [h] is an unexpected finding. Another surprise: (ĥ) variability seems to be directly correlated with length and intensity of exposure to Esperanto. However, this may be the same phenomenon already reported for the age factor: older speakers show greater (ĥ) variability, and older speakers happen to have greater exposure to Esperanto. Since (ĥ) variability, at least over 1.00, helps to determine the overall competence of a given speaker, it is not surprising to find a strong correlation between low competence and high (ĥ) variability. Lastly, as expected, degree of formality is strongly related to (ĥ) variability:

Part of Interview	(ĥ) Variability
Narration (III)	.18
Questionnaire (I)	.19
Reading (II)	1.56
Overall	1.36

This means that in spontaneous speech, whether free narration or questions

and answers, any manifestations of (ĥ) other than [k] are all but nonexistent whereas in reading style (ĥ) occurs not only as [x], as would be expected, but also as [h].

ĥ is thus truly marginal in Esperanto, the sociolinguistic evidence converging with the structuralist synchronic-diachronic evidence given above. A list of stems or words with (ĥ) observed in our data follows: ĉeĥ-~ĉeĥ- [-k-~-x-], hierarĥio [-ç-], kemi- [k-], teknik- [-k-]; given in the reading: ĥora [x-~kx-~h-], aĥ [ax~ah~ha] (once as [há↓áx↓]).

The manifestations of (-n) were indexed as follows:

0 [n] where -n is standard,

1 [n] where ϕ is standard,

2 ϕ where -n is standard.

The linguistic conditions of [n]~ϕ for (-n) were not systematically investigated. In the case of this variable, demographic factors do not seem to play a role; age, in particular, is not a factor. Native language, however, is again of influence, so it seems, speakers of Germanic background, especially German and Flemish, exhibiting lower (-n) variability than speakers of French, Polish, and Japanese:

Native Language	Number of Subjects	(-n) Variability
German	2	.00
Flemish	1	.03
English	8	.14
French	5	.19
Japanese	1	.23
Polish	1	.25
Total	18	Average .14

Before we jump to conclusions about native language influence--the Polish case seems particularly atypical--we must consider the linguistic competence involved. (-n) variability is an important determinant for assessing overall competence in Esperanto, and it is therefore natural that high (-n) variability correlates strongly with low linguistic competence. Likewise, relatively little exposure to Esperanto, measured in years and weekly hours of contact (pp. 14-5), is related directly to high (-n) variability. The influence of the speech situation and concomitant differential formality is shown in the following tabulation:

Part of Interview	(-n) Variability
Reading (II)	.03
Narration (III)	.32
Questionnaire (I)	.37
Overall	.14

It is not surprising that (-n) variability is at its lowest in the reading part of the interviews and at its highest in the spoken parts. However, the higher average variability, both for (-n) and (ĥ), in the questions and answers (part I) as against the narration is unexpected. Even if part I was more formal as to setting, it seems that the subjects had a greater opportunity to monitor their speech in part III (the narration). In any case, there is a strong correlation between the reading situation and both (-n) and (ĥ) variability, and a possible weak correlation between each of the two speech situations (parts I and III) and the realization of both linguistic variables.

Apart from linguistic competence in Esperanto and speech situation (i.e. degree of formality or style), the most important factor in accounting for variability in Esperanto seems to be the speaker's native language

and other languages he controls. The findings for (ĥ) and (-n) presented above on this score (pp. 18-20) are of some significance at least in the aggregate and for English, French, and Germanic. Native language influence is particularly striking in the case of another linguistic variable, (r), not yet investigated in detail. (r) is realized as [ɣ] or [ɣ̆ř] by French speakers, as [[ɣ̆ř̆ř] by German speakers, and as a retroflex constrictive [r] by some English speakers. There is also some overlap with g and ĝ in Esperanto speakers from Belgium, whether native speakers of French or Flemish: [ɣ̆ç] for g, as in Belgujo [bɛlɣújo] Belgio [bɛlçíjo]; [ɣ̆x] for r, as in ĥora ripetado [xɣ̆a xipɛtádo]. Worth further investigation with Japanese speakers: syllabic s and n, or syllabification and rhythm in general. A curious kind of negative interference or hypercorrection was repeatedly observed with French and English native speakers in the reading part of the interviews. Although lastĵaŭde was printed with a very distinct ˆ, a number of subjects with that linguistic background read ĵ as [j].

4. Implications. The notion of marginality and the recognition of variability in Esperanto suggest important consequences for those concerned with the promotion of Esperanto, with the guidance of Esperanto's further development (e.g. in terminological work), and with the teaching of Esperanto. I hope also that the present analysis contributes to a redirection of scholarly work on Esperanto; for esperantology has been a field beset with naive speculation, wishful thinking, pseudo-linguistic myths, and too many attempts at idiosyncratic manipulation (two recent examples: Waringhien 1970, Albault 1973).

NOTES

[1]One curious revival of this erroneous notion is found in a recent paper by an adversary of Esperanto (Mayrhofer 1972: 27). The latter's argument against the full functional potential of Esperanto appears the more doubtful because of his uncritical acceptance of Courtenay's claim.

[2]Is the marginality of oŭ the reason why Waringhien 1970: 842 lists pobo as an implied alternant for poŭpo (the form given in Grosjean-Maupin et al. 1947: 378, but not in the PIV)?

[3]Or phoneme cluster--depending on interpretation. Although dz has, compared to c, a restricted distribution (it does not occur initially), this phonetic cluster (or sibilant-released d?) is usually interpreted as a single phoneme (Kalocsay and Waringhien 1958: 41, 47-9, McQuown 1950 [1964: 557-8]).

[4]Maat- may be marginal, alternatively, because it contains a long vowel. Of course, the core system of Esperanto does not have length contrast, neither vocalic nor consonantal. Cf. the discussion of double consonants below.

[5]The pronunciation [k.z] for written kz, if ever observed, would be a marker of extra careful style--a datum of interest to the sociolinguist.

[6]Note Waringhien's alternant Lasso--beside Lasao (both in Waringhien 1970: 619).

[7]Even Zamenhof 1962 [1911]: 59 went as far as admitting [ij] realization of j before vowel.

[8]Miñael- is not listed separately, but appears under ĉj. Of course, it is a likely candidate for marginality because it is a proper name, and contains a hiatus and the phoneme ñ. Incidentally, Miñael- is the only morpheme with ñ in the First Book.

[9]Occasionally, technical suffixes (e.g. of chemical or biological terminology) or such international roots as -logi-∿-log-, -nomi-∿-nom-, -grafi-∿-graf- (as in astrologio∿astrologo, astronomio∿astronomo, geografio ∿geografo [but not fotografio∿fotografo--a different pattern]) become productive. Cf. Ten Seldam 1955: 218-9 and Akademio de Esperanto 1968: 11.

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